

11 April 1980



MEMORANDUM FOR: Agency Office Heads

FROM: Harry E. Fitzwater  
Director of Personnel Policy, Planning,  
and Management

SUBJECT: Reduction in Hiring Time

1. The time it takes to recruit, process and bring new employees on board has been of continuing concern to all of us. This is to advise you of new procedures which the Office of Personnel Policy, Planning, and Management (OPPPM) has adopted to reduce this hiring time. The procedures outlined below result from extensive system dynamics modeling which identified major blocks of time spent in the hiring process and who is responsible for the time. Of particular concern, the model revealed that we lose 0.5 percent of our applicants per day because of the extensive time it takes at every step of the way: from initial contact, through decision-making and clearances, to EOD. By expediting each step, it is possible that the time spent in employing professionals can be reduced from an average of 325 to as little as 81 days and possibly 48, and clericals from 167 days to as little as 42 days, and even possibly less.

2. Among the steps that have been taken are:

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memo* { a. Installed a minicomputer (CAPER) to track applicant files, monitor processing and accumulate statistical data on applicant flow and time.

b. Amended procedures so that no records or files are created on applicants rejected in the initial screening. This eliminates 20,000 files a year from the system and the attendant workload.

c. Established an Applicant Screening Panel (ASP) to immediately screen out and reject those candidates who have nothing to offer the Agency. The Panel is rejecting 65 percent of the applications that previously would have clogged the processing system. The Panel also identifies those offices for which each candidate appears to be qualified.

d. Developed a new two-part Personal History Statement (PHS). The first part of four pages contains information on qualifications and will be used by offices to express interest in interviewing applicants. The second part contains information to be used by the Office of Security in conducting an investigation. By the use of the new two-part PHS, we expect to get Part I returned in ten days rather than the 24 now required and to increase the rate of return from the present 60 percent.

e. Asked each of the major user components to prepare an unclassified description of their Offices for inclusion in information packages forwarded to their applicants.

*clearance time!* { f. Asked the Offices of Security and Medical Services to prepare criteria that they use to clear applicants. These will be included in the application package and it is expected that this self-screening will eliminate some applicants who would not make it through the clearance process.

g. Established a group of expeditors, including a representative from the Offices of Security and Medical Services, to ensure quick decisions at each point from getting applications in, through office decisions and processing, to setting early EOD dates.

h. We are hiring part-time Xerox operators and couriers to reproduce and hand-carry applications to offices. By sending the application out concurrently, the file review time will be reduced to 14 days from an average of 30 days and maximum review time of 81 days when five or more offices are interested in the same file. The ten-day office file review time will be rigidly enforced by the expeditors. We will bring applicants in for office interviews as soon as possible to achieve early acceptance or rejection.

i. Initiated processing of engineers and computer science applicants as soon as suitable applications are received. About 70 such applicants are now in process.

j. Put the Skills Bank listing on a computer for one-day "electronic mail" delivery rather than the three days formerly required to deliver them to each component through the regular mail system.

k. Asked the Office of Security to polygraph local clerical applicants and to conduct a pre-investigative interview on all other applicants immediately after office interviews and prior to beginning the field investigation. This will eliminate many applicants who must now go through the entire processing before it is determined that they should be rejected. This in turn reduces the processing workload, thereby reducing the time it takes to clear applicants.

3. Under the new system, the Applicant Screening Panel (ASP) will concurrently:

- a. Place acceptable resumes on the Skills Bank List.
- b. Send the resumes to offices which may be interested in the applicant.
- c. Mail the applicant a package which contains the medical and security criteria, flyers about offices for which the applicant may be qualified, and applications. The first part of the new PHS will be completed by the applicant and returned within two weeks. The second part, containing information necessary for security processing, will be completed and brought in for the pre-processing interview or polygraph.

4. When Part I of the application is received, it will be sent only to those offices which expressed interest in the resume. Offices will have ten days to decide whether they wish to bring the applicant in for an interview. If we do not hear from them within ten days, the applicant will be rejected. If the office is interested after the interview, the applicant will be given a pre-investigative interview by the Office of Security. If this is successful, the office will then request that OPPPM put the applicant in process.

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5. We are concerned about the accuracy of requirements we receive from offices each year. For example, last fiscal year we had requirements for 1,600 new employees. We entered on duty almost [ ] which brought us to within 30 of the Agency ceiling. When we have a larger data base in our minicomputer and have developed the necessary modeling techniques, we will be monitoring the flow of applications against office requirements to determine problem areas. We expect that this phase of the new system will be operational by August and that next fiscal year's requirements reported by each office can be made more realistic.

6. A major related problem concerns Recruitment Guides. Recent surveys of supervisors making decisions on applicant files show that only about 10 percent had ever seen their Recruitment Guides. When shown to them, these supervisors were appalled at the inaccuracies contained in the guides. Since the Recruitment Guides are the major reference tool used by the recruiters to refer candidates, they must be current and accurate. We ask that supervisors and managers involved in selecting applicants update their guides and that you personally review them. We ask that the revised guides be forwarded to OPPPM within the next 30 days.

7. In order to better acquaint you with the recruitment process, we have scheduled briefings on the new system for your Directorate. You will be notified in the near future of the time and place of the briefing. We urge you to attend this briefing since a reduction in hiring time is a goal we all share. We believe that a strong cooperative effort can help us meet this goal.

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Harry E. Fitzwater

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Career Opportunities  
For Computer Scientists  
in the Central Intelligence Agency

Working Environment

CIA offers exciting challenges to computer science majors, as well as engineers and mathematicians with computer science interests. CIA's Office of Data Processing (ODP) operates one of the largest and most technologically advanced computer installations in the U. S. Government. IBM and Amdahl large scale processors and minicomputers from several manufacturers host a broad range of software systems including: MVS, JES3, VM, CMS, TSO, CICS, and UNIX. These support a variety of programming languages and data base systems, such as, PL/1, FORTRAN, COBOL, APL, BASIC, PASCAL, C, GIMS, and RAMIS. In addition, ODP provides a number of proprietary software packages to computer users involved in such varied tasks as economic research, medical technology, and behavioral research.

Initial Assignment

Computer scientists entering ODP may be assigned one of two major career fields: computer applications development, or computer systems engineering. Assignment will depend on the employee's interests and the needs of the Agency. In either area, new employees will receive a thorough orientation to CIA and ODP and continued training to adapt their academic education to ODP's working environment. Senior computer professionals guide new employees as needed to ensure that they make meaningful contributions to the Agency's mission and develop satisfying careers.

Applications Development

Computer Programmers and Systems Analysts develop applications software to support intelligence collection, analysis, and production, as well as a broad range of administrative and management functions. Applications include analytical models, graphics, signal analysis, medical technology, office automation, and large integrated data base management systems. While some of these applications are unclassified, most involve highly sensitive national security data. Programs are developed and maintained through terminals using a variety of programmer workbench tools available on ODP's timesharing network.

### Systems Engineering

Systems Programmers, Telecommunications Specialists, and Computer Equipment Analysts develop and maintain a sophisticated and technologically advanced computer network designed to place computer power directly into the hands of intelligence analysts and support personnel. Tasks include: maintaining system software for interactive, online, and batch processing systems; testing and quality assurance for large software/hardware development projects; designing and developing special purpose information processing systems; testing and installing proprietary software packages; measuring the performance of large scale computer systems; planning and designing future computer configurations; developing and maintaining telecommunications networks; and interfacing computer equipment.

### Research and Development

Computer scientists in CIA constantly strive to provide state-of-the-art computer technology to intelligence analysts. Frequent contacts with computer manufacturers, research firms, and computer user groups ensure that CIA remains on the leading edge of technology. Projects range from large data base management systems and high speed text search to office-environment micro-processors and electronic mail.

### Professional Development

ODP employees are offered continuing education and professional growth through in-house training programs, computer manufacturer's training, tuition sponsorship at local colleges and universities, attendance at computer conferences and seminars, and participation in professional societies and computer user groups. Great emphasis is placed on remaining current in the rapidly evolving fields of data processing and computer science. After three years, ODP employees are eligible to compete for an annual one-year fellowship to continue their studies full-time in an academic program of their choice. Rotational assignments with other offices in CIA are a normal step in the career progression of ODP employees. Eventual career development may lead to managerial positions within ODP or other parts of the Agency. The analytical skills and systems approach that computer professionals bring to bear on problems are much in demand in CIA and the Intelligence Community.

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